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847 their girls because they are unable to support them. It is impossible to get enough information to make a reliable estimate of illegitimate births and infanticides, but it is certain that both are very numerous among both rich and poor.

754 791 When a person falls sick a quack doctor may make him believe that his spirit has already departed and entered into a certain pregnant woman, and that the only hope for his life is to curse this woman and make her miscarry. This is done by the 胎術 *t'ai shu*, womb black art. Generally a witch is called in; she takes an egg and recites over it an incantation somewhat as follows: "If the spirit has gone south the south precinct god 土地神 *t'u ti shên* will bring it back; if to the north, the north precinct god will do the same," etc. The egg is then put in hot ashes, and if it spurts in any direction the spirit is called back from that quarter with the usual ceremonies. Persons known as *shuan t'ai-ti* 拴胎的 are called in for the purpose of counteracting this black art.

845 It is believed that deformed and maimed births 腐精瞎怪 *ch'üeh ching hsin kuai*, are the outcome of sin, whether of adultery or of irregular intercourse as to time or place.

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CHAPTER II

PASSING THROUGH CRISES

(OR, CROSSING THE BARRIERS 度關 *tu kuan*)

To take children through the important crises in their lives is the work of a sorcerer. On consultation the fortune-teller announces the critical times in the child's life, when that life may be in danger. The sorcerer's help is then asked for, and he invokes the aid of the *k'ai-kuan t'u-ti* 開關土地 the precinct god who opens barriers.

The following are a few of the crises or barriers which may occur in a child's life, and with respect to which he must be carefully guarded.

There is the 短命關 *tuan ming kuan* or short-life barrier, which means that the child may die at any age before 12 years. At 12 the barrier or crisis is over. There is also the 100-days barrier; the child is not safe till past that age.

The Buddhist-priest barrier 和尙關 *ho-shang kuan*, means there is danger that the boy will run away from home and become a priest, which is equivalent to losing him altogether.

The "knock-door crisis" 撞門關 *ch'uang mên kuan* means there is danger that the child some time visiting a neighbour's house will get bitten by a dog or catch

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852 754 some infectious disease. This barrier is avoided in the following fashion. The parents take the child out for a walk, and accost the first person they meet, pedlar, beggar, or what not. They salute him and tell him the matter, asking him to become surety for the child. If he consents he will give the child a new name and become his *kan tieh* 乾爹 informal adoptive father (or *kan ma* 乾媽 adoptive mother). The person is then invited to the house and food put before him, and the same evening the necessary ceremony, much the same as in sorcery, is performed in the house.

The danger may be that the child must pass the *lei-kung kuan* Thunder-god barrier, or be killed, as the Chinese say, by thunder. Such death is regarded as evidence of the special displeasure of Heaven.

Another crisis is the *ch'ü-ming kuan* 取命關 or taking-life barrier. There is danger of the child's life being taken by a demon. In this case a butcher is asked to become surety or adoptive father, because he carries a knife and can thus frighten away the slaying demon. Much the same ceremony is performed as in the "knock-door crisis."

It may be threatened that some heavy or sharp article shall fall on the child and kill it: this is a *tao-chên kuan* 刀砧關 or knife and anvil crisis. A butcher with his knife or a blacksmith with his sledgehammer is sought as *kan tieh*.

The danger may be that of drowning, *lo-shui kuan* 落水關. Any willing person may be made *kan tieh* in this case.

The *p'ei-ma kuan* 披麻關 or donning-sackcloth barrier, means that there is danger the child may be left an orphan, or that he will fall sick if he sees anyone in mourning.

The crisis to be dreaded may be that the child will one day fall through a hole in some bridge and be drowned. This is the *tuan-ch'iao kuan* 斷橋關 or broken-bridge crisis.

The child may be liable to the *chiang-chün kuan* 將軍關; that is, he may be accidentally shot. To avert this calamity, or to get past this barrier he must worship at the tomb of some military general 將軍, or at some memorial stone. Such a lad will most likely carry through life the nickname *pei* 碑 or tablet, because he worshipped at the stone slab.

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There is a crisis recurring at 3, 6 and 9 years old, *san liu chiu sui kuan* 三六九歲關. The child with this threat on him is not allowed to travel far or visit any house where a corpse or coffin may be till he is ten years old.

The white tiger barrier 白虎關 *pai-hu kuan*, means that a dog will bite the child, or a demon attack him, or that he will be left an orphan.

There is fear that the child will be made ill by the sight of blood; this is called the blood-dish barrier 血盤關 *hsüeh-p'ên kuan*. A butcher is the proper *kan tieh* to be sought for in this case.

There is danger lest the child should be scalded by the upsetting of a kettle of water or burned by the fire-brazier in the winter. The people are in the habit of putting the fire-basket under their clothes or even taking it to bed with them with the result that many lives are lost and much property destroyed.

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776 If the family worships a *t'an shên* 壇神 or altar of lemuria or shades, then that spirit looks after the animals; otherwise the duty falls on this tutelary god and the kitchen god. Often when a child falls sick or the pig gets the measles, an offering is made to this god. He has two slaves, *chao t'sai* 招財 and *chin pao* 進寶. These names are often given to dogs; hence a saying 來狗主富 *lai kou chu fu*, when a dog comes he rules the riches.

T'an shên is the altar of the lemuria or ghosts. The spirit is believed to be a man named Chao, 趙 formerly prefect in Nan Yang. The altar is in the left-hand corner of the chief room. Some are fixed shrines, others are moveable and are often a hollow stone in which incense is burned. It is mostly used by the superstitious wealthy.

788 791 Every three or five years there is a 'tranquillizing' ceremony: see under Sorcery and particularly under the heading *ching t'an*.

When a family changes its abode or when anything unlucky has happened in the house the family altar has to be pacified 安神 *an shên*. This is the work of the *huo chü tao* 火居道, married Taoist Sorcerer.

The same class of priest is used for the worship of heaven 供天 *kung t'ien*. During this ceremony the family altar is covered with a chart or tablet. A table is placed outside the door under the open sky and an offering of incense and candles is made.

The ceremony is most commonly performed when the paying back of a vow is required. A son may, for example, vow to offer to heaven so many sets of candles and incense sticks if a parent is healed of a sickness, or gains a lawsuit, or has a safe journey. A *set* means 32 of each kind, but if a Buddhist priest officiates (which is seldom, except at a funeral), the set is only 24.

788 754 What would appear to have been originally an exceptionally pure act of worship is now often a pretext for gratifying the lowest passions. For instance a man may vow an offering to heaven if a certain enemy dies or has his line of succession cut off, and the like.

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The tablet used is 三十二天上帝中央一元梵天帝君 *san shih êrh t'ien shang ti chung yang i ch'i fan t'ien ti chün*; or a Buddhist priest uses 二十四諸天菩薩無量世尊 *êrh shih ssŭ chu t'ien p'u sa wu liang shih tsun.*

Note that there is one incense stick and one candle for each spirit worshipped.

Another ceremony is the worshipping or thanking Earth *kung ti* 供地 or *hsieh t'u* 謝土.

This is deemed necessary when a house has been repaired, the dragon having possibly been disturbed; or when a new house is first occupied, or when 土府不安 *t'u fu pu an*, the place does not agree with the resident. This is indicated perhaps by his digging up some unlucky thing, such as *t'u lung tan* 土龍蛋 dragon's eggs, which are black, soft balls with contents like blood: in such cases there is need to worship Earth. Or it may be necessary because a geomancer states that the resident is at variance with the five capital evils 五皇煞 *wu huang sha*, or with those of the current year *sui* 歲 *sha*, or with that of the yellow flag *huang fan* 黃幡 *sha* or that of the leopard's tail *pao wei* 豹尾 *sha;* when Earth is worshipped these disturbing spirits are worshipped.

This ceremony also is managed by a married Taoist sorcerer. A table is set outside the house and candles and incense lighted on it. On the ground the four points of the compass are marked by lines of dry lime, a candle being stuck in the earth at each extremity of the lines and in the centre. Sometimes, especially when the fault is with the house itself, the ceremony is performed in the chief room.

Five tablets are set up to the five dragons of the five points *wu lung shên* 五龍神, inscribed with 東方青帝青龍神君 *tung fang ch'ing ti ch'ing lung shên chün*, the eastern green dragon spirit, and similarly for the other four, which are the southern red, the western white, the northern black, and the central yellow dragon spirits. Along with these tablets there are others to the gods of the five planets; in the east the wood-virtue god (Jupiter), while south, west, north and middle are the gods of fire-virtue (Mars), metal-virtue (Venus), water-virtue (Mercury), and earth-virtue (Saturn) respectively. The inscriptions are 東方木德星君 *tung fang mu tê hsing chün*, etc.

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for which purpose the horoscope is necessary. He mentally carries away the particulars of the horoscope. The bark is then peeled from a growing tree, and the horoscope pasted on the bared part, and anathematized by him for forty-nine days, after which time the piece of the tree with the horoscope is gouged out and taken home, and a small idol made of it, which is also anathematized, till such time as the image speaks; at this juncture it is believed that the child dies. This little idol is further worshipped and taught to do as it is bid. It may even enter houses and steal for its master. Or it may be let loose in an enemy's house for revenge, intimidation or robbery. This last is practised by the following people:

Nuns (尼姑), *ni ku*, *Tao ku* (道姑); *hua ku* (花姑), embroidery women, who very seldom have husbands and are sometimes men in disguise; toothache witch doctors (牙婆), *ya p'o*, who pretend to extract the worm from a diseased tooth by way of the eye; *wen p'o* (穩婆) and *ch'ü shêng* (取生) *p'o*, midwives; or 藥媽媽, medicine mothers; *hsiang* (相) *p'o*, physiognomists; fortune tellers, *suan ming* (算命) *p'o*; and go-betweens in marriages, *mei* (媒) *p'o*.

The above classes, on entering a house, are sure to make trouble. If they are meanly or harshly treated, they may let loose a ghost in the house, which will manifest itself in the following ways: short hair will be found in the rice-steamer, or filth of various kinds will find its way into the rice; reeds become transformed into darts and fly at people; the rope on which tobacco leaves are dried becomes a snake to bite the family; twigs become fire-darts to set the house on fire; a paper image steals the family property; tiles are pulled from the roof of the house in the night, or brickbats are thrown into the house in the night; the house is set on fire at any time, but specially in the night, or the shell of the bamboo sprout becomes a living being to frighten people; or they annoy by making the rooster crow at bedtime and the dogs bark all the night through.

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Sometimes large sums of money are paid to have a ghost taken out of the house, but twenty or thirty taels is quite a common price. If the person who let loose the ghost is invited to remove it, he will demand much more than another, but another can do it. When he does find the wooden idol it is burned and it is popularly believed that the person who let the ghost go will suffer, because the spirit will go and harass him. Most Chinese have a great dread of certain objects and houses which are supposed to be haunted, and it is with the greatest difficulty that they can cut clear of this superstition; it should always be borne in mind that such things are very real to them, however silly they may appear to us.

The "Planchette."

To seek the counsel of the spirits by the aid of the stylus, *k'ung chung hsüan pi* (空中懸筆). Various forms of this cult have been in use for many centuries. The present mode is to make a string of silk thread or human hair and suspend it from the roof, with a pen made of peach or willow twig. Directly under this pen is placed a table covered with fine dry river-sand. Incense and paper are burned before the tablet of the stylus house god, the attention of the spirits called and their help besought.

When the spirits come the pencil moves and writes characters on the sand. If nonsense is written, the manager, *chi shou* (乩手), further invokes the spirits by the *k'o t'ou* (kotow) and more incense and paper burning, and when the pencil writes real characters one man reads aloud and another makes a record. Enquiring from a converted *chi shou* as to the possibility of falsifying these pencil motions, he declares that with this kind of stylus there is no trickery, but the pencil does not move without being invited and not always then, and seldom moves to advantage, but he has known it to write wonderfully true things.

The tablets written in the stylus house are of two different sorts, one to the celestials, the other to *lü tsu* (呂祖). They are as follows:

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buzzing about, but as soon as they are caught they become pieces of paper again. 789

The leaves and twigs of a willow tree are broken into pieces and thrown into the river, where they appear to become fishes, but when caught they are simply the willow twigs.

A coin is placed on the upper side of a thick board with one hand and received on the lower side with the other.

A child is laid down with the stomach bent upwards, boxes full of heavy things are put on its stomach, then a man goes on to the top of the boxes, but still there is no sign of the distended stomach giving way under the weight.

A child is taken and rolled in red calico, the conjurer asks for money and, after a contribution has been given, a sword is displayed and the child yells, then another collection is taken up, after which the child's arm is cut off and thrown to the horrified crowd, and still another collection is taken up, then another arm is cut off and thrown out. The child is thus gradually dismembered before the gazing and credulous crowd, but the greatest wonder of all is that this child will be well and about the next day! This is generally the last and most exciting act of the conjurer in a place; for this he often gets large sums of money in collections.

Divination or Sorcery, Wu Shu (巫術).

A sorcerer is called *tuan kung* (端公); the classical name is *nan wu* (男巫), and the colloquial or slang name is *kuei hsiang yo* (鬼鄉約). 754 791

A witch is *tuan kung p'o* (端公婆), *tsou yin* (走陰) *p'o*, *shên hsien* (神仙) *p'o*, or *nü wu* (女巫) (a bookish name). One term may be common in one place while another will be used elsewhere.

Though the art of divination is much the same everywhere, still the Tibetan art is more intense than that practised by the Chinese sorcerers. The Tibetan sorcerer does all the Chinese do and some things extra. So before dealing with

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the subject as found among the Chinese we will notice the practices peculiar to the Tibetans.

A Tibetan sorcerer is called *man* (巒) *tuan kung*. The idol worshipped by him and used in his practice is a full-dressed lama or Buddhist Tibetan high priest.

When a demon is being exorcised a boiler is made red-hot and the afflicted person made to stand in it: it is believed that if his feet do not blister there is no hope of his recovery; or a red-hot chain is put round his neck with the same cheerful hope of blisters.

The sorcerer opens a vein in his own body and lets blood flow on to a cloth, which is given to sick persons to carry as a charm, *k'an hsüeh fu* (砍血符).

In Chinese sorcery an altar is set up, *shê sung* (設送), for the taking away of a disturbing demon from a sick person, and paper money is burned.

It is customary to worship a person's natal star in order to avert calamity or death. Each person is believed to have a star which influences him through life; and the stars are believed to be governed by the Dipper (*tou*), which is largely invoked by Taoist priests and sorcerers to avert death or other calamity, *jang hsing li tou* (禳星禮斗). When a person comes to a certain period in his life believed by fortune tellers and others to be unlucky, a sorcerer is called in to bridge over this difficult time. For people who have had an accident, or for homes where something unlucky has happened, also when a person has reached a great age, the friends and neighbours get up a subscription and present him with a night's incantations; they also present a joint petition to the king of Hades and stand surety for the person's good character and beg that many years may be added to his life. In this ceremony a tablet is written to the local god who joins the bridge of longevity (接限壽福土地); to this tablet the younger generations *ko t'ou*. The work of the sorcerer is all done in the night. When chanting for the living, cow-horn trumpets are employed; but in wakes for the dead the conch-horn or sea-shell is used.

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Setting up the altar for the purpose of divination is an elaborate affair. A chart belonging to the sorcerer is hung up over the family gods; in this chart the *san ch'ing* (三清) have a prominent place. A bushel and a pint measure are filled with grain or dry river-sand, into which sand are stuck lighted candles and incense, all having been previously placed before the sorcerer's chart. The "three pure" are *t'ai ch'ing* (太清), *yü* (玉) *ch'ing* and *shang* (上) *ch'ing*, and are said to correspond to heaven, earth and man. A tablet to the five heads of demons or *wu ch'ang* (五猖) is put under the table; the tablet to all the poor spirits or 寒林 is put up outside the door. The writing being 寒林會上五音五姓孤魂由子等衆, "To the heads of the Society of the orphan spirits of all names and kinds."

To cleanse the altar the divining priests go with beating of gongs and blowing of trumpets to a stream or pool of water and bring back a vessel filled with clean water; this is called *ch'ing shui* (請水). The water is sprinkled all over the altar and vessels, after which the priest opens the ceremony by putting on his robes and worshipping the idols and tablets all round; this is spoken of as *k'ai t'an*, to open the altar.

The priest prepares a genealogy of the sick person, his name, residence, details of the sickness, etc., which is first read to the company and then despatched to the spirit world by burning.

After the despatch has been sent telling of the need, then the company waits to receive the return message from the spirit world.

The divining priest then enters the kitchen and asks the kitchen god to use his good offices on the sick person's behalf, while the family of the sufferer kneel in a row before the kitchen god to implore his assistance.

The repentance ode is chanted and a prayer for the healing of the disease; this is done amid the beating of gongs and drums, and the yelling of the priests who are ably assisted by the juveniles of the family.

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The priest next makes a number of charms, one to be worn on the person, another to be hung on the bed curtains, another for the bedroom door, and one is burned and the ashes put into a basin of water which has been cursed, and is drunk by the sick person. These charms are supposed to drive away the demons from the clothing, the bed and the inward man. This ceremony takes it as a foregone conclusion that all sickness is caused by demons.

After burning paper money in little or great quantities according to the ability of the family, the priest takes the clothes of the sick person and bears them, along with a tablet on which is written his name and genealogy, out to a place overlooking a hollow with water in it. Here the priests assisted by the relatives call back the spirit of the sick person from across the waters, repeating several times the following two sentences, *san hun kuei shên, ch'i p'ai fu t'i* (三魂歸身, 七魄附體); that is, may the three souls and seven spirits return to the body; then they finish up with a weird yell of "come back, come back." Of course when the sick man is in delirium it is believed that the soul has already left his body and gone wandering elsewhere.

Straw or reeds of any kind may be used to make an effigy, and paper clothing is made and put on it. Wine and rice are offered to it. A piece of paper money is ignited and applied to the ears, eyes, nose and mouth. Sometimes a needle is used to prick these four organs; all this is done with incantations, after which the effigy is supposed to become accursed as the substitute of the sick person. It is carried to the sick chamber and is addressed by the sorcerer as *mao ta lang* (茅大郎), great straw gentleman, or as *mao ta chieh* (茅大姐), great straw sister, according to the sex of the sick one. One sorcerer faces the effigy and questions it and another crouches behind it and answers the questions; while a third sits on a chair and pronounces judgement. The effigy is asked from whence he came; and for what purpose. The sorcerer from behind replies that he has come from a great distance purposely to be the substitute and bear the penalty of the sick person, whose name he gives.

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A vegetable knife, scales, three pairs of chopsticks, one charm, one sorcerer's tablet called a *shih tao* (師刀) or master's knife, are collected. The tablet and charm are the property of the sorcerer, while the other things belong to the family. These things the sorcerer gathers together in one hand, swings them round his head, and drops them behind his back; and then all the persons gather round and listen to the reading of the omens of these articles as they lie on the floor and give indications as to the outcome of the sickness. If the three pairs of chopsticks lie in order, recovery is considered to be probable. These chopsticks are spoken of as the *lu ma* (祿馬), emolument horses; if lying in order it means the patient will need them and use them.

The scissors in this affair are known as the *chu ch'üeh* (朱雀), or red bird. Birds are all reckoned unlucky because their beaks are pointed, but birds with red patches or red beaks are much more so, and make trouble or even death in the family. The vegetable knife is spoken of as the white tiger (白虎). If the sharp edge of this knife should lie near the rope handle of the scales, it is reckoned to be a very unpropitious omen; as white is the sign of mourning and the tiger is the most ravenous of wild beasts. The scales are reckoned to be the sick man's body, and whatever falls near this is reckoned to be falling near the sick man himself. If the *ling p'ai* (令牌) or charm falls near the scales it is an indication that the spirits are protecting. The writing inside the tablet is said to be the Pearly Emperor's name. The arm jutting out with the three crosses is said to be the three pure ones, who are believed to be peculiarly fitted for the work of frightening away demons.

The next proceeding is to *fên kua* (分卦), to read the diagrams. These are made of two pieces of bamboo which fit closely and exactly together. The two parts are thrown into the air; if the two flattened sides fall with their faces to the ground, that is called a *yin kua* (陰卦), female diagram; if the flat sides face upwards that is called a *yang kua* (陽卦), male diagram; if one flat and one round side lie upwards that is called a *shên kua* (神卦), spirit diagram. The female diagram is reckoned very unlucky, while the male and spirit

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diagrams are reckoned lucky, especially the latter, and the spirits are invoked repeatedly to give a *shên kua.*

At this juncture the sorcerer enters the sick chamber, taking the straw effigy and a mug containing an egg. The sick person draws a deep breath and blows into the mug, which is then covered with a white cloth and firmly tied with a string. The sick person then blows a deeply drawn breath on to the face of the straw effigy, and in this way it is believed that the sickness demon is put into the mug and his life put into the straw substitute, who suffers for him.

A paper tray on which are painted various kinds of demons and called the flowery plate is brought; the candles, incense and other signs of the proceeding are gathered and, together with the mug, are put on a sieve and carried with the effigy outside the door of the house; the sorcerers then put up charms on the bedroom door and in the kitchen. A basin of rice soaked in water, and another basin of dry rice is then put on the sieve; into the latter sticks of lighted incense and lighted candles are stuck; the whole is then carried out to a secluded place, where the effigy is burned; the mug containing the egg is buried and the incense and candles stuck into the ground; the rice is carried home by the sorcerer; the sieve and basins are taken home by the members of the family, but are thrown behind the outside courtyard door for three days before they dare take them inside the house, lest any evil influence should be clinging to them.

When the party returns from escorting out the evil influences, the sorcerer proceeds to take down his chart, burns incense and exhorts the family gods, packs up his sorcerer's paraphernalia, eats a hearty meal, counts the wages of divination and takes his departure.

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out demons. These screens are called *ch'a p'ing* (插 屏), stuck-in screen. When a house is troubled with sickness the neighbours often ask whose dirty demon has come hither to give trouble.

When a person has a hatred for another and is bent upon secret revenge, a straw effigy of the enemy is made and pricked in the eyes and nose with a needle, cursed and burned; it is believed that this will inflict sickness or even death upon the enemy and is spoken of as *shê yin chien* (射 陰 箭), shooting a secret arrow. Another way is to go to the temple of the city god, and accuse the person at the idol shrine; the indictment is written out and presented with candles and incense, after which it is burned to ashes. This is called *kao yin chuang* (告 陰 狀), making an indictment to Hades. When a dead child has been carried out of the house, the doorstep is sawn or hacked to indicate that the debt of some ancestor has now been paid in full.

Sometimes over the door of the house will be found written the two characters *i shan*, one good deed; being an abbreviation of the saying, "one good deed will cover a thousand bad ones." This is to deceive the demons and keep them out of the house.

Some haunted houses have a mirror hung up over the door, so that when the demon comes and sees his own face he will take fright and depart. Some parents use for their children what are known as tigers' pillows so as to frighten the demons.

On the eighth of the fourth moon there is a custom known as *chia mao ch'ung*, or marrying out the caterpillar. The idea is that caterpillars are females and in marrying them out they will leave this part of the country alone. A small red rosette is put up in the chief room of the house as an evidence. 佛生四月八, 毛蟲今日嫁, 嫁在深山去, 永遠不歸家. On the eighth of the fourth moon was Buddha's birth. On that day caterpillars are married out. Married far into the mountain recesses never more to return.

At the spring equinox there is a custom known as *ching chüeh wang*, to reverence the king of birds. Rice loaves are